GNU NEWS

Sirs,

Many people say that yaks have no sense of humor. This is untrue. Yaks have a highly sophisticated sense of humor, as the yak joke below proves. Gnus have no sense of humor.

{Grunt. Grunt grunt grunt. Sniff! (Paw, paw, paw.) Grunt?

(pause)

Grunt sniff!}

Signed, YAK X

This letter from a disgruntled reader has prompted the N.Z.T. editorial staff to launch a serious investigation of its own attitudes and prejudices toward yaks, resulting in a 105-page white paper that is now required reading for all staff writers.

But even this is not enough. Disgruntled readers demand that the sins of the past be rectified.

(Gruntled readers demand nothing, as usual.) So, in the spirit of equal treatment for all bovine species, the N.Z.T. now begins a series of public-service messages designed to enlighten its readership on the subject of gnus.

Did you gknow...

that the gnu is an African antelope, bulky but compact?

that "gnu" comes from the Bushman word "nqu"?

that Dutch settlers in Africa called the gnu a "wildebeest"?

that the white-tailed gnu, or black wildebeest [Connochaetes gnou] is xtinct in the wild?

that the brindled gnu, or blue wildebeest [C. taurinus], is abundant on African grasslands, forming migrating herds of a million individuals or more?

that both sexes of gnus grow horns?

that grazing gnus are often bothered by gnats?

that gnus studying geology often confuse gneiss with schist?

that gnus require large quantities of water and have been gknown to eat ice during the cold season, if they can get it?

that a herd of gnus can migrate less than seven thousand miles in a singleday?

that a gnu's only defense against predators is running away? (Gnarled old gnus tell an old gnu story about one that tried (and failed) to scare off a big cat by gnashing its teeth and gnawing its gknees.)

that a gnewborn gnu can stand up only five minutes after birth, follow its mother after ten minutes, and run as fast as an adult after 24 hours?

that gnus in flight toss their heads, prance, and throw up their heels?

that baby gnus learn to fly only when the parents push them out of the gnest?

that a gnu can tell time by observing the shadow of its raised tail, which is gknown as a gnomon?

that gnus, although gnative to Africa, sometimes wander as far gnorth as Zurich, where they are gknown as gnomes?

that a popular African rock group is gknown as Ghuey Glewis and the Gnus?

that a gnu was almost elected to the Toledo, Ohio, city council? (It lost in a recount.)

that a group of religious fanatics in Tibet believes that St. Botolph has been re-incarnated as a gnu on a local farm?